

Background

The Superfund Task Force was commissioned on May 22, 2017 to provide recommendations on how EPA could streamline and improve the Superfund program by focusing on expediting cleanup and redevelopment and engaging partners and stakeholders. In addition, the Administrator established the Administrator's Emphasis List which included 21 National Priorities List Superfund Sites across the country that were targeted for immediate and intense attention. Silver Bow/Butte and Anaconda Smelter are two of those sites.

The Silver Bow Creek/Butte site is in Butte, Montana and includes 26 miles of stream and streamside habitat downstream from Butte. Since the late 1800s, mining wastes have been dumped into areas in and around Butte, as well as into streams and wetlands near mining operations, and smelters and mills produced aerial emissions contaminated with arsenic and heavy metals. These activities contaminated soil, groundwater and surface water with heavy metals.

In 1982, EPA proposed the Silver Bow Creek be added to the National Priority List (NPL) and it was listed as a Superfund site in 1983. Butte Area was added to the Silver Bow Creek site in 1987. From 1988 to 2005, EPA completed several removal actions in Butte to clean up areas around former smelter sites, mine waste dumps, railroad beds, stream banks and channels, and residential yards to address immediate human health and environmental risks. A Record of Decision for the Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit (BPSOU) was issued in 2006 and has been partially implemented. BPSOU includes impacted soils, mine wastes, and contaminated attic dust located within portions of the city of Butte, along with mining-impacted alluvial groundwater and surface water associated with the historic and current Silver Bow Creek floodplain within the City of Butte. EPA continues to work with the community, project stakeholders, and PRPs to oversee the ongoing cleanup work and to develop plans for the remaining remedial actions at BPSOU. Implementation of these provisions of the remedy and the State's restoration plan will provide a comprehensive cleanup and will conclude over three decades of major removal and remedy cleanup actions projects in the BPSOU.

The 300-square-mile Anaconda Co. Smelter site is located at the southern end of the Deer Lodge Valley in Montana, at and near the location of the former Anaconda Copper Mining (ACM) Company ore processing facilities. In 1884, ACM and its predecessors started large copper concentrating and smelting operations at Anaconda. Atlantic Richfield (AR) ceased smelting operations in 1980 and the smelter facilities were dismantled soon thereafter. After over a century of milling and smelting operations, high concentrations of arsenic, lead, copper, cadmium, and zinc were produced. These wastes contaminated soil, groundwater and surface water with hazardous chemicals.

The Anaconda Co. Smelter site was placed on the National Priorities List of Superfund Sites in 1983. Cleanup is complete at several areas within the site and these areas are currently protective of human health and the environment. Where remedies are not complete, access is controlled to prevent human exposure. However, the community of Anaconda has expressed concerns about the protectiveness of the cleanup and EPA has re-evaluated the risk analysis, developed in the 1990's, and modified the cleanup remedy for lead and arsenic. In 2015 EPA directed AR to

resample 2000 homes for lead, as well as all schools, parks and daycares. Sampling and cleanup will continue through 2022 and possibly beyond.

Outreach activities and results

In order for EPA's current and future work at Silver Bow/Butte and Anaconda to be successful and align with the Superfund Task Force recommendations, the site teams developed an aggressive outreach program which included numerous opportunities to present proposed site work to the local community and stakeholders. This was done to advance understanding of EPA's proposed decisions regarding cleanup of these sites and to educate the public and provide opportunity for public engagement, discussion and feedback. Without these accelerated outreach efforts, EPA's proposed actions and decisions for cleanup of these sites would have stalled out. The teams efforts, openness, and honesty brought even one of their sharpest longtime critics around to acceptance and support for the cleanup plan at BPSOU (Dr Ray).

Commented [S51]: If we could say something specific about results for each site it would be more compelling – any ideas?

Below is a list of some of the activities performed by this team in 2018-2019 that clearly shows their outstanding commitment to environmental outreach and advancing senior leadership engagement and stakeholder understanding of EPA's Superfund cleanup approach at these sites to ensure protection of human health and the environment. Their commitment to honest and open communication with the local communities was extraordinary and represents the best of the Superfund program.

Commented [S52]: Do we have a similar success with Anaconda – what is the latest with Bill Everett?

April 2018: Planned/coordinated RA visit to Anaconda and Butte for site tours, two public meetings and media engagements focusing on the Superfund Task force goals for these and presented the paths forward for consent decree (CD) and future cleanups.

May 2018: Coordinated the public outreach on the modification of the confidentiality order at Butte so that EPA and CD parties could publicly release negotiated future work plans at the BPSOU. Planned and coordinated two public meetings for 80 attendees and engaged in multiple media events to present the newly released future work plans for the BPSOU. Coordinated with ATSDR and Anaconda site staff to hold listening session in Anaconda for future health studies to address community concerns.

June 2018: Coordinated visits with Superfund leadership to introduce them to Restore our Creek and other key stakeholders in Butte and Anaconda.

September 2018: Coordinated site tours and stakeholder visits to Butte and Anaconda for Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler, RA Doug Benevento and Senator Steve Daines.

November 2018: Coordinated the public outreach on the modification of the confidentiality orders at the Anaconda Smelter Superfund site and RA visit, public meeting and media events.

March 2019: Coordinate RA Doug Benevento's site visits and stakeholder meetings in Anaconda and Butte to announce his departure as the RA, along with media events.

April 2019: Coordinated the release of the BPSOU proposed plan for a record of decision amendment. Coordinated the first of two proposed plan public meetings and media events that followed.

May 2019: Coordinated the second proposed plan public meeting and media events that followed. Provided multiple briefings on the Anaconda and Butte sites to the new RA Greg Sopkin.

Commented [S53]: I would like to be able to say more than planned/coordinated something like "delivered" to show that the team was a strong contributor to the success of these events not just the planners or logistics folks. Any ideas?

June 2019: Planned and coordinated RA Greg Sopkin's first visit to the EPA MT office, Butte and Anaconda Site tours. Coordinated local government briefings and keys stakeholder meetings related to this tour and subsequent media events.

Commented [SS4]: Andrew checked with Nobe and the award time period is a year and has to end 4/30/19 so I deleted these last 2 activities.

Citation suggestion

For outstanding commitment to advancing progress through environmental outreach at Montana Superfund Sites.-

Award Outreach criteria that fits this work best

- Demonstrates outstanding commitment to environmental outreach in EPA Region 8
- Produce a produces or activity that advances understanding of EPA's role or rational for a program regulation position action or decision

Commented [SS5]: Andrew this is for context for you as you refine write up